

REMARKS

The present Amendment is in response to the Examiner's Office Action mailed July 3, 2007. Claims 8-17, 19-49, 70, 71, 74, and 76 are cancelled, claims 1, 5, 72, and 73 are amended, and new claims 77-102 are added. Claims 1-7, 18, 50-69, 72, 73, 75, and 77-102 are now pending in view of the above amendments.

Reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested in view of the above amendments to the claims and the following remarks. For the Examiner's convenience and reference, Applicant's remarks are presented in the order in which the corresponding issues were raised in the Office Action.

Please note that the following remarks are not intended to be an exhaustive enumeration of the distinctions between any cited references and the claimed invention. Rather, the distinctions identified and discussed below are presented solely by way of example to illustrate some of the differences between the claimed invention and the cited references. In addition, Applicants request that the Examiner carefully review any references discussed below to ensure that Applicants understanding and discussion of the references, if any, is consistent with the Examiner's understanding.

I. Allowed Subject Matter

The Examiner has indicated that claims 5, 71, 72 and 74 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. In response, Applicants have amended claim 1 to represent claim 71, amended claim 73 to represent claim 74 and rewritten claims 5 and 72 in an independent format so as to include all of the limitations of the base claim. In particular, the scope of claims 1, 5, 72, and 73 has not been narrowed in any way from that indicated as allowable by the Examiner so as to overcome any prior art, but has merely been rewritten in an independent format. As acknowledged by the Examiner, each of those claims are patentably distinct from the prior art, and are now in condition for allowance. Moreover, for at least the same reason, claims now depending from one of claims 1, 5, 72, and 73 – namely, claims 2-4, 6, 7, 18, 50-69, and 75 – are also in a condition for allowance.

II. NEW CLAIMS

Claims 77-102 have been added and depend from claim 72 which was indicated as allowable by the Examiner. As such, claims 77-102 are also allowable. In summary, claims 1-7, 18, 50-69, 72, 73, 75, and 77-102 are now pending in view of the above amendments, and all are patentably distinct from the prior art. Allowance of each of these claims is respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicants believe the claims as amended are in allowable form. In the event that the Examiner finds remaining impediment to a prompt allowance of this application that may be clarified through a telephone interview, or which may be overcome by an Examiner's Amendment, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned attorney.

Dated this 11th day of July, 2007.

Respectfully submitted,

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